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ABSTRACT

Waubonsee Community College (WCC) employs electronic technology to meet the needs of its students and community in virtually every phase of campus operations. WCC's Information System Center, housing three mainframe computers, drives an online registration system, a computerized self-registration system that can be accessed by telephone from off-campus, an automated library card catalog and circulation system, the student records system, a combined personnel/payroll database, budget administration software, and a computerized career guidance information system. In addition, electronic technology has been or will be applied in the following areas: (1) an automated telephone message system has been implemented, which allows students to leave voice messages for any staff member and permits the college to inform all students in a class of a cancellation or other instruction-related matters; (2) the Learning Resources Center has introduced an Electronic Encyclopedia and a file of business and financial information on compact disk; (3) WCC will soon begin operation of a direct path interactive microwave system to link the college with four area high schools and two postsecondary campuses; and (4) the college will also have Instructional Television Fixed Service capabilities. Computers and electronic instructional equipment are now used in more than half of the classrooms at WCC, and the college's instructional program offers an extensive data processing and computer science curriculum, word processing, computer-aided drafting, desktop publishing, robotics, and other high technology programs of study. WCC has found that electronic technology supplements and enriches the curriculum while reducing operational costs. (MDB)

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ELECTRONIC CAMPUS MEETS TODAY'S EDUCATION MISSION

Waubonsee Community College
Sugar Grove, Illinois

Waubonsee Community College has made a major commitment to applying state-of-the-art technology to meeting the needs of the students and community that it serves. Virtually every phase of campus operations has been affected by electronic applications--including the instructional program, support service area, registration system, high school recruitment program, and budget administration system. It is noteworthy that all of these applications are practical in nature and enhance the colleges ability to provide effective service to its constituents. At Waubonsee, advanced technology is much more than a showpiece.

The role of electronic technology is highlighted by the computer controlled electronic message board at the college entrance. Controlled by a personal computer located in the Public Relations Office, the public is greeted by a moving list of major events scheduled on campus each day. The messages can be changed or varied on an automatic basis throughout the day.

Perhaps the heart of the college electronic system is the Information Systems Center which houses three Hewlett Packard 3000 mainframe computers and an IBM 4361. The HP3000's drive an online registration system, a computerized self registration system (that can be accessed by telephone from off campus) an automated library card catalog and circulation system, the budget and payroll/personnel system, the student records system, and a computerized career guidance information system that serves 22 high schools, five colleges, and two universities. One of the HP3000's is dedicated to instruction along with the IBM4361.

The college has several different types of student registration--a self registration system using a computer terminal, mail registration, touch tone telephone registration (via access to the computer), and the traditional standup registration found on every campus. The computerized self registration enables the student to call up his student record and register for classes--all without any staff assistance. A set of simple step by step instructions facilitates this process. The touch-tone telephone registration system makes it possible for the student to call in to the college from the comfort of his home or workplace and register for courses. This is available on a 24 hour a day, 365 days per year basis--which is especially valuable for weekends and holiday periods. An IBM AT personal computer drives this system and provides a set of voice instructions to lead the student through the registration process. The IBM AT works in concert with the mainframe student database in carrying out this process. The enrollment enhancement potential of this system is significant as well as the savings in staff time.

Another electronic application is the voice mail automated telephone system recently installed on both campuses. This features a

central switchboard tied into an AT&T Dimension 400 phone system that is augmented by a Dytel Automated Attendant. This system makes it possible for students to call in and leave voice messages for any office or staff members. Staff can call in from off campus and receive any messages left in their voice mail box. Our phone system also contains a Watson System that makes it possible to access student rosters for any given semester and automatically call all students enrolled in a particular class to inform them that class is cancelled. The effect of this state-of-the-art telephone system has been to extend the effectiveness of all staff members and make every area of the college more accessible. Students and faculty find the system to be especially useful in communicating about instruction related issues. This system also operates on a 24 hour per day-seven day per week basis.

The instructional program at Waubonsee Community College is enhanced in a variety of ways by electronic technology. Our Learning Resources Center has become a library of the future by installing an Inlex Automated Library System. This is a stand alone system which runs on a Hewlett Packard 3000 that is linked via a network system to the mainframe college computer. The HP3000, located in the LRC, is dedicated solely to the Inlex System. The modules currently in operation are an online catalog and the circulation system.

There are eight public access terminals located in the LRC, two circulation terminals, and three terminals in the technical services area. The system has the capability of providing remote access via telephone to anyone who has a personal computer, a modem, and standard communications software. Dialup access is available virtually 24 hours a day. This makes it possible for a student, area resident, or business person to access the LRC holdings from their own home or place of business. It is also an invaluable research tool for all library users. The card catalog can be searched by title, subject or author in a matter of seconds.

Recently the LRC added DIALOG, which is an online database containing over 200 files in a variety of fields, including business, medicine, general interest, engineering, psychology, and education. The files contain indexes and financial reports as well as full text articles. Many DIALOG files are updated daily or weekly, so this is an excellent source for current events on a national level. DIALOG is quick, the coverage is thorough, and it can be accessed by telephone from outside the college.

Another high technology application is the addition of the Electronic Encyclopedia, which is a compact disc product accessed by the student through a personal computer. Every word in every article is indexed. Search results will indicate every article where the word or combination of words appears. This is not possible in a paper encyclopedia. Students can browse through the articles, and print out all needed pages.

Finally, the LRC has added Compact Disclosure, which is a compact disc file of business and financial information extracted from reports

public companies file with the U. S. Securities and Exchange Commission. The scope of facts, figures, and financials provides users with detailed profiles of more than 11,000 companies whose securities are traded on the New York Stock Exchange, American Stock Exchange, NASDAQ, and over-the-counter. This product has unlimited applications for a number of purposes. As a fund-raising tool, there is access to corporate and individual prospect identification. As a career source, there is background information for employment prospects or executive recruitment. As a corporate reference tool for businesses in our community, it identifies candidates for merger, acquisitions or joint ventures. In addition, it can fill the need for competitive surveillance. As a private tool, it can help in making investment analysis. Finally, and certainly most importantly, it can serve as an excellent tool to our students in business classes who have to write detailed analyses on a number of businesses. The database is updated six times a year in an effort to keep it current.

These high technology additions to the LRC have served to make the resources of this excellent instructional support facility more accessible and more convenient for our students and area citizens and has helped to move the college into the electronic future in an area not normally thought of as a high technology facility.

Waubonsee Community College will soon begin full operation of a telecommunications system that will employ a 23GHz, direct path, interactive (video and audio) microwave system to link the college with four area high schools, the downtown Aurora Campus, and the Illinois Math and Science Academy located in nearby Aurora, Illinois.

This is a collaborative project, facilitated by an intergovernmental agreement between the college, area high schools and IMSA, that will enable the high schools to originate and telecast courses for up to five schools at the same time and make it possible for the college to originate courses at either the main campus or the Aurora Campus and teach them to two or more groups of students simultaneously. College courses will also be offered at the receive sites in the area high schools either during the day or in the evening to supplement and enrich the high school curriculum. The college evening extension program will also be expanded through the system.

The implications of this for curriculum expansion and cost savings are significant. It means that one teacher can teach up to four or five classes located at different sites simultaneously. It means that a special course in exotic subjects such as Japanese Language and Culture or High Energy Particle Physics (taught by a scientist from Fermi Laboratory in nearby Batavia, Illinois) can be offered to students attending both large and small high schools. It means that an upper level mathematics or science seminar class can be offered to high ability seniors regardless of the size, location, or wealth of their high school district. Other courses that are scheduled include third and fourth year foreign language courses, world cultures, and humanities courses. The capability to fully utilize the talents of

outstanding teachers in each academic area and expand the curriculum offerings of all high schools in the consortium is an important consideration--aside from the substantial cost savings to the participating schools. The college will be able to share instruction between the two campuses on a regularly scheduled basis, expand extension course offerings, reduce instructional costs, and make the skills of our best faculty members available to a much wider audience.

The system will also enable the college and the participating high schools to access satellite programming and feed it through the system. We look forward to enriching the instructional programs at all levels by making the educational offerings broadcast over West Star IV, and other satellite programs, available to area students on a 9-14 grade level basis.

Currently, we are in the process of adapting the direct path microwave system to accommodate our Guidance Information System program that we operate for area high schools. This system, that presently uses a telephone modem for data transmission, will be put on our microwave system.

Finally, the Telecommunications System will include Instructional Television Fixed Service (ITFS), which is a general broadcast signal that will carry programming for our Business and Industry Institute as well as a linkup with CENTEL Cable Television, which serves the area. We expect to eventually have a full channel for Waubonsee programming through this connection. This will carry telecourses, GED instruction, ESL instruction, as well as special feature programming on college activities. The enrollment potential of this is significant.

Our instructional program offers an extensive data processing and computer science curriculum as well as word processing, computer aided drafting, desktop publishing, robotics, electronic technology, industrial maintenance, automotive computer systems, and a total fitness center that features electronic heart monitors and computerized energy monitoring equipment as part of the conditioning program. The college has six computer laboratories as well as computer assisted instruction in accounting, nursing, the social sciences, English, speech, the natural sciences, and several other liberal arts areas. Two Apple II computers are even used in music classes to augment instruction. Computers and electronic instructional equipment can be found in more than half of the classrooms at the college.

Waubonsee Community College utilizes its computer resources to full advantage in administering the college budget, student records, payroll system and in maintaining personnel records.

The Personnel/Payroll System consists of a single database. Users of the system require little assistance from the computer operator, except nightly backups, in the daily functions of the system. Both the personnel and business offices initiate their own jobs and have their own printers for reports and pay checks.

The personnel module, implemented in July of 1983, consists of 20 online screens and about 200 reports. A new employee must be entered by the personnel office before pay information can be added to the payroll. After an employee leaves his record is deactivated preventing further processing for payroll purposes. An attendance module tracks vacation, sick days, and personal days. The latest enhancement tracks the yearly salary and raises of all employees.

The payroll module, implemented in January of 1984, consists of 10 online screens and approximately 50 reports. After entering payroll data the payroll clerk runs the computer program and prints the checks and various reports.

The use of fourth generation software has greatly improved the ability to meet the changing needs of the various systems at Waubonsee.

Budget administration at Waubonsee is enhanced by the use of our computer capability and the database system known at MONEY. The staff at Waubonsee Community College needs to have a way of looking at all transactions even after the period is closed out.

Users may access the MONEY database by typing in the following commands:

MONY . . . Displays a screen of the entries sorted by date
MONYP . . . Prints entries on a printer in the user's area
MONYS . . . Prints entries sorted by purchase order number on laser

A recent addition to our system is the NEWBUDGET program which allows users to enter a future year budget. Implemented in January of 1988, the system eliminated the task of retyping purchase orders from requisitions and encumbering them into the accounting system.

A requisition is now entered online in the various user departments. Account numbers and account balances are verified by linking to the accounting system. For security, the requester enters their electronic signature. If the requesters capability code is not high enough, a supervisors signature is also required. The purchasing agent receives a daily listing of all requisitions pending her signature. Purchase orders are then generated from the approved requisitions on a laser printer and the encumbrance is also posted to the accounting system.

Finally the Waubonsee Community College Job Placement Program has been enhanced by the application of computer technology. Employer job information is entered into the system describing the position available and the number of days the position is to be listed. Job listings are created and posted weekly throughout the campus. Students interested in a position may go to the Job Placement Office for more information. Information on job seekers may also be entered into the system for future position openings.

In summary, Waubonsee Community College is employing electronic technology to expand our educational market, enhance our instructional program, and better serve our constituents. Our offices and services have become more efficient and the college has realized significant operational cost savings. Most importantly, the move into advanced technology has served as a catalyst for change in almost every area of college operations and has placed us on a fast track in our move into the future.

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